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Summary Record of NSC Executive Committee Meeting No. 19,  
November 3, 1962 -- 4:30 PM

Prior to the reading of a summary of the latest intelligence on Cuba by Director McCone, Secretary Rusk said we may be experiencing the greatest deception in our history if the Russians are not removing their strategic missiles from Cuba. (Mr. McCone's summary was apparently a special intelligence estimate prepared by USIB.)

The President suggested that the summary be sanitized and given to Mr. McCloy to use in his conversations with Soviet representative Kuznetsov.

The President then read the attached instruction to all officials concerned with the present negotiations with the Russians on Cuba. Ambassador Thompson pointed out that the reference to no Soviet missile base in Cuba is a reinterpretation of what Khrushchev agreed to.

Ambassador Stevenson read a list of questions which he hoped would be answered. Ambassador Yost of the USUN mission reported on negotiations with the International Red Cross aimed at establishing inspection at sea of Soviet ships leaving Cuba. Red Cross inspectors aboard neutral ships would go along side the Soviet ships, board them and inspect them. It was hoped that the Russians would accept this sea inspection system.

Ambassador Stevenson reported efforts to set up a verification system on the ground in Cuba. The Russians are prepared to have UN inspectors look at the missile sites after the removal of the missiles and the destruction of the sites. We have insisted on inspection in the interim during the time the missiles are being dismantled and the sites destroyed.

Mr. McCloy reported on his talks with Mikoyan and Kuznetsov. The big problem is to get verification which covers all of the island. The Soviets appear to be stringing out the negotiations. Castro may well refuse to accept arrangements agreeable to the Russians. Examination of cargo at sea is very difficult and reading ship manifests in ports is not very helpful. One suggestion is that we ask the Soviets for the list of weapons and missiles they sent to Cuba. We would check outgoing equipment and missiles against this list. If we cannot arrange an inspection system at the docks in Cuba, we will have to work out some kind of inspection system at sea.

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Secretary Rusk commented that the Soviets are under an obligation to see that the offer they made to us is implemented.

Ambassador Stevenson said there was little difficulty in seeing the missiles, but seeing the equipment is considerably more difficult. He felt that we should try to get an ex poste facto inspection of all of Cuba. If we cannot get this, we should accept inspection at sea. Our last resort position would be to seek inspection at the home port of the Soviet ships taking the missiles from Cuba.

General Taylor suggested that we should ask the Russians for their withdrawal plan.

The President said we must insist on UN inspection on the ground. Ambassador Stevenson replied that we had no difficulty on this point with the Russians, but the Cubans were being recalcitrant. He believed that we would eventually have to accept an inspection at sea or inspection at the debarkation port.

With reference to our overflights, Ambassador Stevenson said the Russian position was that they could not agree because the Cubans refuse to permit overflights. The Russians say Cuba is an independent country which they cannot force to accept actions which are an invasion of their sovereign air space. It may be necessary for us to drop back to inspection at sea or at debarkation ports.

Mr. McCone noted that the SAM sites appeared to be under Soviet control.

The President asked whether we could obtain a sampling of outgoing cargoes by UN inspectors on docks at each of five ports. However, this procedure does not provide permanent safeguards against reintroduction of strategic missiles.

Ambassador Stevenson suggested that one way to deal with the future would be to support the nuclear-free zone for Latin America. Cuba might accept inspectors enforcing a nuclear-free zone treaty because inspectors would be visiting all Latin American countries.

The President said we should ask for the removal of the IL-28 bombers. Ambassador Stevenson commented that he believed the IL-28s would be removed, possibly by air.

Mr. McCloy raised the question of whether the President should see Mikoyan. A decision is to be made later after McCloy had talked to Mikoyan.

Ambassador Stevenson predicted that the Cubans and the Russians would insist on a Security Council meeting. He linked this meeting to actions which we plan to take with the OAS. Secretary Rusk commented that we were in no position to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba because no procedures had yet been worked out for the inspection of the withdrawal of the strategic missiles. He felt we should insist upon performance before giving any guarantee.

The President said he wanted any wording of a non-invasion guarantee to be approved by him before being discussed. He preferred that we limit any commitment to that included in our letter to Khrushchev rather than making a reference to our obligations under the UN charter. He pointed out that our commitment would refer only to invasion and not exclude use of the threat of force. He asked for a paper which would summarize what we expect the Cubans to agree to, what we expect the Russians to agree to, and what we ourselves are prepared to agree to.

Secretary Rusk referred to reports of sabotage in Venezuela apparently instigated by a pro-Castro group or Cubans. The President said we should be as tough as we can in dealing with such situations.

Secretary McNamara asked that the New York negotiators repeat our insistence that the IL-28 bombers be removed from Cuba. He said he thought we should force the Russians to answer whether they intended to withdraw the bombers. Until the Russians answer on this point, he recommended that we reach no agreement of any kind.

Mr. McCone estimates there are forty IL-28s in Cuba. We have seen nine on the ground and additional planes still in their crates.

The President said he was willing to talk to Mikoyan if Mikoyan's attitude was reasonable in his discussions with McCloy.

The President discussed our public attitude toward the Cuban crisis. He was not certain how much concern we wanted to surface. He felt that our attitude should be one of vigilance and watchful waiting. We should publicly make clear that we were insisting on implementation of all of the deal made by Khrushchev. We could say that we were sticking firmly to the terms of our offer. So far, Khrushchev has not denied the position we have taken in the letter to him. However, he has never

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said that he specifically accepted our offer. Thus, the deal we have with Khrushchev consists of what we say it is.

The President raised the question of what we should say about the IL-28s. He believed we should say publicly that we considered bombers as part of the deal, i.e. weapons offensive to us which would be withdrawn from Cuba. He agreed that we should delay announcing our public position on the bombers until tomorrow.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the President revised and approved an announcement to be made tomorrow upon the conclusion of our current nuclear test series.

Bromley Smith

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